

HOUSE BILL 7004

By Mumpower

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 7; Title 49, Chapter 8 and Title 49, Chapter 9, relative to higher education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 49, Chapter 9, is amended by adding the following language as a new part 15:

**49-9-1501.** The purpose of this part is to accomplish the following:

- (a) Foster economic growth by significantly increasing the number of science, technology, engineering and mathematics doctoral students produced at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and expand the number of University of Tennessee, Knoxville graduate students conducting their graduate research and education at the Oak Ridge National Laboratory working with Laboratory scientific staff and using the unique facilities of the Laboratory; and
- (b) Accelerate the State's economic and workforce development efforts in the field of energy sciences and engineering; and
- (c) Support the continued development of clean energy technologies and jobs in Tennessee; and
- (d) Leverage for the purposes set forth herein the existing capabilities of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and Oak Ridge National Laboratory; and
- (e) Elevate the status of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville as a top tier national research institution through expanded collaboration with the Laboratory;

(f) Encourage and facilitate the development of an interdisciplinary program in energy science and engineering at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville that will provide students an opportunity to undertake transformative research activities; and

(g) Promote and develop support for collaborative research and development by interdisciplinary teams of University of Tennessee, Knoxville faculty and the Oak Ridge National Laboratory in energy-related fields.

**49-9-1502.**

(a) The University of Tennessee is authorized to establish an academic unit of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville for interdisciplinary research and education in collaboration with the Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

(b) The Chancellor of the University of Tennessee, Knoxville and the Director of the Oak Ridge National Laboratory are authorized to enter into an agreement concerning collaboration in interdisciplinary research and education designed to accomplish the purposes of this part. The provisions of this agreement shall address matters including, but not limited to, the appointment and oversight of graduate students, the appointment of ORNL staff as faculty, and the development of interdisciplinary curricula between the two institutions. Nothing in this part shall limit in any way the authority of the United States Department of Energy with regard to the ownership and operation of Oak Ridge National Laboratory.

SECTION 2. Notwithstanding any law to the contrary, nothing in this part shall be deemed or construed to abrogate in any way the applicability of federal law relative to the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, its management and operation.

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.